United Nations A/HRC/35/NGO/133

General Assembly

Distr.: General
12 June 2017

English only

Human Rights Council
Thirty-fifth session
6-23 June 2017
Agenda item 3
Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

Written statement* submitted by the Souke Gender Justice Network, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[1 June 2017]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

GE.17-09516(E)

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Accelerating efforts to eliminate violence against women: Engaging men and boys in preventing and responding to violence against women and girls

Recommendations
MenEngage Alliance

1. It is suggested interventions explicit references to gender transformative approaches and to position this language as the basis for all the suggestions for the implementation of strategies, programing, education, policy reform and campaigns discussed therein. Going beyond the need to merely engage men and boys, a transformative framework would include consistent mentioning of the need to "address root causes" and to transform "social norms", "power", "privileges", and "stereotypes", in particular related to masculinities or manhood.

   For example:

   > *"Fully engage men and boys as strategic partners and allies in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by designing and implementing national policies and programmes that address the roles and responsibilities of men and boys, including the equal sharing of responsibilities in caregiving and domestic work, and encourage men and boys to engage fully, as agents and beneficiaries of change, with the aim of eliminating all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls in both the public and private spheres, by understanding and addressing the root causes of gender inequality, such as unequal power relations, gender stereotypes and negative social norms that view women and girls as subordinate to men and boys, as a contribution to women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work" (CSW 61 agreed conclusions, paragraph 40bb)*

2. It is suggested that interventions include the relational aspects of gender, and position the engagement of men and boys as one strategy, amongst many in the full realization of gender equality, with interventions promoting the rights of women and girls and the rights of women and men to experience the full spectrum of gender identity, as others. In this sense, strategies, programs, education, policy reforms and campaigns targeted towards the engagement of men and boys, are contextualized within the broader women's rights and gender justice movement.

   For engagement of men and boys to be successful in contributing to women's rights and gender justice for all, implementation and monitoring are required. This requires allocating adequate resources, without taking away resources for working with women and girls.

   We call for research into promising practices that challenge the harmful gender stereotypes and negative social norms, attitudes and behaviours that underlie and perpetuate such violence. Including lessons learned about transforming violent masculinities and engaging men and boys to prevent and combat violence and discrimination against women and girls is essential to efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against them.

3. It is suggested the implementation of comprehensive education in order to influence gender socialization in boys and girls. Formal education and school-settings are an opportunity to counter stereotypes from an early age and instill values of gender equality and human rights. This requires clear parameters for design and implementation, including curricula and training of teachers.

   We find a strong anchor for this approach in the Sustainable Development Goals:

   > "By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship

and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development" (SDG Goal 4.7).

4. It is suggested that interventions carefully consider the usage of the terminology 'men and boys as agents and *beneficiaries* of change', taking into account the sensitive nature of the wording and the necessity to appropriately frame this terminology to avoid misuse and/or excessive repetition. It is suggested that men and boys are instead referred to as allies along women and girls.

5. It is suggested that the recognition of the roles of civil society groups and organizations, such as feminist groups and youth groups. Noting that UN Women's HeForShe, while informed by CSO examples and in some contexts implemented by CSOs, is a UN-agency initiative. If specific initiatives are to be named, we suggest those that are CSO-led, such as MenEngage Alliance (700+ CSO and NGO members worldwide across six regional networks and 34 country networks), White Ribbon Campaign (a global movement of men and boys working to end male violence against women and girls, implemented in over 60 countries across five continents) and the MenCare Campaign (a global fatherhood campaign active in more than 40 countries on five continents).